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EAST AFRICA ENVIRONMENT

East Africa is endowed with a wealth of biodiversity and natural resources, including some of the most spectacular wildlife and ecosystems in the world. When managed well and equitably, these vast yet fragile lands contribute significantly to national and regional economies and improve the lives of local communities.

The pressure of growing human populations, changing weather patterns, rampant wildlife poaching and trafficking across porous borders, and disjointed management of shared natural resources threatens East Africa's conservation efforts. Habitats in East Africa cross political boundaries, thus it is critical for nations to work together on the survival of wildlife and the habitats they depend on. A regional effort is needed to address national-level problems that are exacerbating the decline in wildlife populations and habitat loss.

CONSERVING EAST AFRICA'S NATURAL CAPITAL

USAID is supporting a regional program led by the East Africa Community (EAC) to strengthen regional leadership and policy harmonization to conserve and manage shared natural resources in East Africa. Through its regional programming, USAID is providing research, data, and economic analysis on the current and potential value of natural capital in East Africa and providing East African leaders with innovative methodologies, tools, and best practices to act. USAID partnerships in the region support stakeholder learning and advocacy and provide decision makers with the evidence they need to formulate effective policy and enforcement.

USAID is partnering with The Walt Disney Company, the U.S. Department of State (State), WildlifeDirect, and local partners in East Africa to develop and launch *National Geographic Kids Africa*, an educational entertainment platform and community engagement model to inspire kids to care about the natural world around them and provide them with the knowledge and

skills to understand, conserve, and protect it. Through this partnership, USAID will leverage resources, field presence, and comparative strengths to scale and sustain development impact for conservation and the protection of the environment; advance behavior change by building knowledge and skills for children and youth; and drive broader economic and social development.

USAID is also working with Earth Journalism Network/Internews to enhance the quality and quantity of reporting on threats to conservation and wildlife, and on solutions to those threats. The partnership is helping to increase awareness in East Africa of the importance of conservation and combating wildlife crime. The partnership provides promising East African journalists with mentorship, training, distribution support and production stipends that allow them to spend time researching and investigating conservation.

COUNTERING WILDLIFE CRIME

Wildlife crime threatens the security, economy, and biodiversity of East Africa. International networks for poaching, transit, and sale of illegal wildlife products target wildlife populations across borders, creating a complex problem that transcends national boundaries.

In line with the U.S. Eliminate, Neutralize and Disrupt Wildlife Trafficking Act, USAID is supporting the East African Community and development partners to enhance wildlife management and improve the enforcement and prosecution of wildlife crime in East Africa. New tools, such as the Trade in Wildlife Information eXchange, helps law enforcement officers in the region share information to stop wildlife crime.

USAID has also partnered with UNDP to reduce maritime trafficking of wildlife at key East Africa ports. The project focuses on strengthening the capacity of law enforcement agencies and coordination with the private sector to prevent, detect and intercept wildlife trafficking.

USAID has an interagency agreement with the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) for a nine-year project that utilizes DOI's expertise in law enforcement, investigation, and prosecution to address the transnational threat of wildlife crime. The partnership provides expertise and training on wildlife protection, law enforcement, and prosecution at national levels in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

BUDGET: FY 2021

\$5 million

KEY GOVERNMENT PARTNERS:

East African Community, Ministries of Tourism and Wildlife, Ministries of Environment and Forestry, and Regional Development Authorities

KEY IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- USAID missions in Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Wildlife Authorities in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania
- U.S. Department of the Interior
- International Union for Conservation of Nature
- World Wild Fund for Nature
- TRAFFIC
- Environmental Incentives, LLC
- Internews
- WildlifeDirect

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